



## South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



# DETACHMENT 48 WELCOMED HOME

The South Dakota Army National Guard welcomed home six Soldiers from Detachment 48, Operational Support Airlift Command, Wednesday, Aug. 22 at the Army Aviation Support Facility near the Rapid City Regional Airport, after completing a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Rapid City-based unit deployed in August 2011 with a mission to provide aerial surveillance in support of ground forces. Det. 48 is a fixed-wing aviation unit comprised of pilots and operations specialists, which operate the C-12 King Air.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the SDNG and Rapid City Mayor Sam Kooiker were featured speakers at the ceremony.

This was the second mobilization for Det. 48, having deployed to Afghanistan for seven months in 2008.



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## AURORA COUNTY WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL DEDICATED

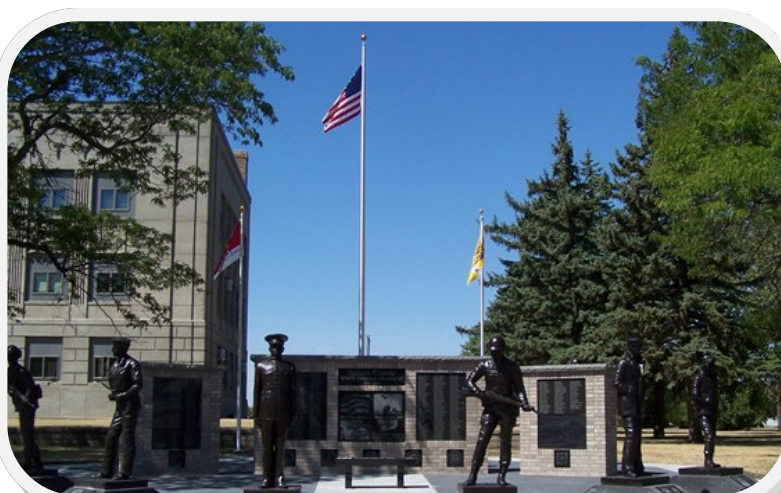
Residents of Aurora County gathered in Plankinton on Sunday, August 19, to dedicate their new World War II Memorial. The memorial is located on the north side of the Aurora County Courthouse in Plankinton. All living Aurora County World War II Veterans were present for the dedication and were recognized during the dedication.

This memorial replaces a memorial that was first built in 1947, when World War II Veterans were still adjusting to life in peacetime. All World War II veterans are listed on the granite tablets located in the center of the memorial.

Families donated and dedicated eight life-size statues that surround the tablets listing the heroes. The rest of the memorial was funded with grants and contributions.

This memorial will enable visitors to view the tablets engraved with all Aurora County World War II Veterans, as well as pay tribute to the men and women who helped preserve our freedom.

As you visit this memorial, or any veterans memorial, take time to reflect on the veterans past, present and future and the sacrifices they and their families made.



## WOMEN VETERANS STAND DOWN

The VA Black Hills Health Care System will host their first Women Veterans Stand Down on Wednesday, September 26, from 2:00 pm—6:00 pm.

The Stand Down will be held in the Sturgis Armory (located at the corner of Junction Avenue and Main Street).

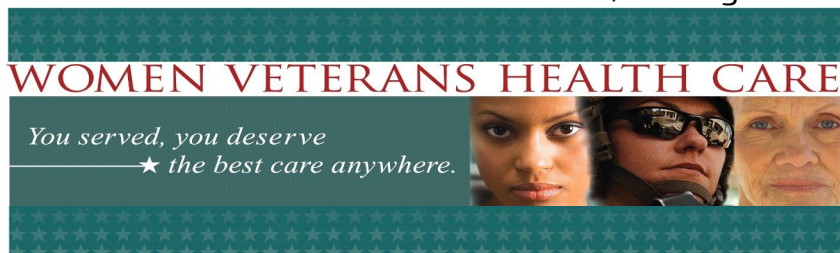
This Stand Down is an intensive service fair for women veterans and their families, offering on the spot help to veterans and their families including: clothing, meals, haircut gift certificates, health promotions, information on disease prevention, mental health referral and information, veterans benefits information, enrollment assistance, homelessness assistance, vocational assistance and much, much more.

To participate or for additional information please contact:

Linda Kinzler-Norheim, VABHHCS Homeless Program Coordinator (605-347-2511) - Ext. 97305

Clint Olive, VABHHCS Homeless Outreach Social Worker (605-890-2533)

Dianna Monahan, Women Veterans Program Manager (605-347-2511) Ext. 97247





## VETERANS DAY AT THE FAIR

The South Dakota State Fair salutes our veterans and active military personnel and will show appreciation for their service with free gate admission for them on Thursday, Aug. 30.

"Join us to salute those who've served our country in the armed forces, as well as those who wear the uniform and defend our country today. The South Dakota State Fair invites all veterans and military personnel to take advantage of free admission into the Fair for this special event," said Jerome Hertel, South Dakota State Fair Manager.

A Salute to Veterans program will be held on Aug. 30 at 10:30 a.m. CDT on the Northwestern Energy Freedom Stage. South Dakota Department of Revenue Secretary Andy Gerlach will be the keynote speaker.

Gerlach was appointed revenue secretary in December of 2010 and officially assumed the role in May 2011. Previously, he served with the South Dakota Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs, first as finance officer and later as deputy secretary. Gerlach started his service to the state in 1993 as a budget analyst with the Bureau of Finance and Management.

Gerlach has served on many boards and committees, including the South Dakota War Memorials Dedication Committee, the Pierre/Fort Pierre State Government United Way Advisory Board, South Dakota National Guard Museum Board of Directors, and Lutheran Memorial Church of Pierre Board of Trustees. Other affiliations include the Federation of Tax Administrators, American Legion and National Guard Officers Association at the state and national level.

A native of Armour, Gerlach earned his Bachelor's Degree from Northern State University. He continued his education and earned his Masters of Business Administration from the University of South Dakota in Vermillion. Gerlach has been a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard for the past 25 years, holding numerous key leadership positions. He currently holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. From June 2010 until April 2011, he served as executive officer of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Kabul, Afghanistan.

The 2012 South Dakota State Fair will run from Thursday, Aug. 30, through Monday, Sept. 3. Channel Seeds Preview night will be Wednesday, Aug. 29. The theme for the 2012 State Fair is "Taste the Fun!" For more information on State Fair events, contact the Fair office at 800-529-0900, visit [www.sdstatefair.com](http://www.sdstatefair.com) or find us on Facebook and Twitter.



## LONG ROAD HOME PROJECT BIKERS VISIT VA

Veterans from VA Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) had the opportunity to visit with five inspiring military heroes on Thursday, August 16, when bicyclists from the Long Ride Home Project made a pit stop at the Fort Meade Campus.

The Long Road Home Project was started by Casey Miller, a civilian, as a way to help Veterans with their transitions home. He selected five military heroes from across the nation to participate in a summer-long bike ride from Aberdeen, Wash. to the District of Columbia, to raise money and awareness for other veterans in need. The journey will take them three months and they will pedal more than 4,000 miles.

Miller selected his group of service people to include men and women of varied ages, backgrounds and interests.

"I tried to get as diverse a group as possible," Miller said. "I figure, pain doesn't discriminate. So why should we?"

The group of cyclists includes service people suffering from partial paralysis, PTSD and homelessness. Two of the cyclists are making this cross-country trek on modified bicycles, made to accommodate their lower extremity paralysis. Veterans at VA BHHCS were amazed by the cyclists' determination, and their interesting bikes.

"Boy, that's something," said Alvin No Horse, when the cyclists brought one of the modified bikes into the facility.

Veterans from VA BHHCS enjoyed an afternoon of recalling their military tales to the visiting Veteran bicyclists. They swapped tour stories and riding tips. By the end of their visit, it was hard to tell who was more inspired by whom.

"I'll think of you when I get up that next hill," said Colleen Bushnell, U.S. Air Force Ret. cyclist, as she parted ways with VA BHHCS Veteran Robert Stillman. "It's been an honor to meet you."





## VETERANS PARK DEDICATION CEREMONY SCHEDULED

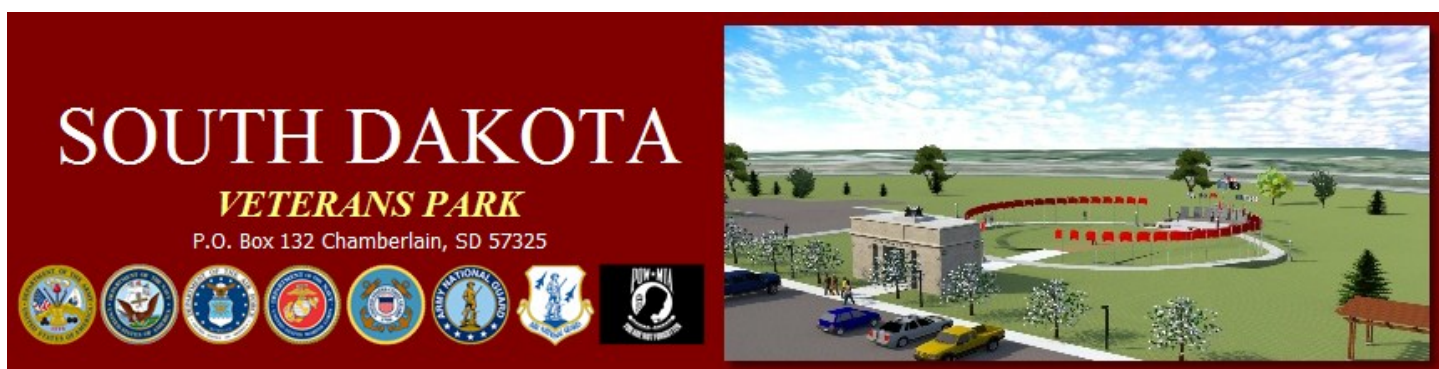
The new South Dakota Veterans Park in Chamberlain dedication will be held on Friday, Sept. 7 at 2 pm at the site near Exit 263 in Chamberlain. The park is near the South Dakota Hall of Fame, which will host the 2012 Hall of Fame Inductee Meet and Greet at 5 pm.

The dedication includes a military fly-by and guest speakers and is open to the public.

Recently, the committee renamed the park from the Tri-County Veterans Park to the South Dakota Veterans Park after receiving a large influx of requests from around the state for memorial pavers. The change was approved by the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks. The committee feels the new name more accurately represents the vision, character and composition of the park and its future as well as complementing the South Dakota Hall of Fame as they share the same campus.

Additionally, the committee extends thanks to the past work of the Chamberlain Area Historical Preservation Association (CAHPA) for acquiring the unique property inside an interstate exchange at exist 263. The members also thank the donors, supporters and the Orrin & Edith Barger Foundation, Mary Chilton Daughter's of American Revolution (DAR) Foundation, the South Dakota Community Foundation, District III Planning, Eagle Sales Wholesale, Chamberlain's American Legion Post and VFW, and local contractors and businesses. For information, visit

[www.tricountyveterans.org](http://www.tricountyveterans.org)



## NEW VSO'S AT TURNER AND CAMPBELL COUNTIES

Turner and Campbell Counties select new Veterans Service Officers.

James Neal will serve as the new VSO for Turner County and replaces Gary Larsen who had served as the VSO since May of 2003. Neal will be at the Turner County office from 9:00—4:00 Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Lester Goehring will serve as the new VSO for Campbell County and replaces Ed Allbee. Ed had served as the Campbell County VSO since May of 2005. Goehring will be at the Campbell County office on Wednesdays from 8:30 am—4:30 pm.

Hopefully, you will have the opportunity to meet James and Lester next week at the VSO Annual Benefits School.

## BLACK HILLS VETERANS MARCH

The South Dakota National Guard's Enlisted Association will host its ninth annual Black Hills Veterans Honor March on Saturday, Sept. 22, in the northern Black Hills.

The march pays tribute to the many sacrifices made by this nation's veterans. Many participants also march in honor of fallen service members.

The 26.2-mile march is open to all military service members and the civilian public. Participants can compete as individuals or in five-member teams and can complete the course by walking, running or marching. There is also a 13.1-mile mini-march available for participants.

Marchers will start on the Mickelson Trail at approximately 8 a.m. (MDT) at the Rochford Trailhead and finish at the Deadwood Fairgrounds. The first half of this march will be uphill to Dumont, then, downhill to the finish line. The march can take between six and eight hours to complete.

Interested participants and volunteers can register for the event by going to the website:

[www.blackhillsveteranmarch.com](http://www.blackhillsveteranmarch.com) or by contacting Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Lamp at (605) 357-2939.

The Black Hills Veteran's Honor March was conceived in 2002 as a way to honor the sacrifices of the nation's service men and women.

The March, which is conducted under the auspices of the South Dakota National Guard Enlisted Association (SDNGEA), grew out of an idea that originated from some South Dakota Army National Guard soldiers who had participated in the Bataan Memorial Death March. It was during the long ride home from White Sands, New Mexico that the idea of a commemorative march could be held to honor all Veterans, and that the Black Hills would be a perfect place to hold such an event. Since the Bataan Memorial Death March takes place in late March-early April, the consensus was that this new event should be held later in the year.

Since its inception, the memorial march has grown to hundreds of marchers from across the United States.



# Upcoming Events

Aug. 27-29—VSO Annual Benefits School—Pierre  
Aug. 27—VABHHCS Stand Down—Rushmore Plaza Civic Center—Rapid City (9:00 am—5:00 pm)  
Aug. 29—Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Stand Down—McLaughlin  
Aug. 30—Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Stand Down—Eagle Butte  
Aug. 30– Sept. 3—SD State Fair—Huron (Veterans Day—Aug. 30)  
Sept. 7—SD Veterans Park Dedication—Chamberlain (Exit 263) (2:00 pm)  
Sept. 11—Stand Down—Wagner National Guard Armory—610 E. SD HWY 46 (10:00 am—2:00 pm)  
Sept. 14—Stand Down—Watertown  
Sept. 21—Stand Down—Sioux Falls - VFW—3601 S. Minnesota Ave. (9:00 am—3:00 pm)  
Sept 21—POW MIA DAY  
Sept. 22—SDNGEA Veterans March—Northern Black Hills  
Sept. 25—Stand Down—Aberdeen Civic Center—203 S. Washington (2:00 pm—7:00 pm)  
Sept. 25 Pierre Homeless Connect  
Sept. 26—Women Veterans Stand Down—Sturgis Armory (Junction Ave /Main St) 2:00 pm—6:00 pm  
Sept. 30—Gold Star Mothers Day  
Oct. 19—SFVAHCS Women Veterans Conference—Sioux Falls Holiday Inn City Centre

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